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8 November 1960

EL SALVADOR

- I. Communists and other pro-Castro leftists are already making a strong bid for power in El Salvador.
 - A. Ex-President Osorio, who engineered last week's coup, tried to get leftist leaders to back the new regime by appointing them to government positions.
 1. But these men, who include the three civilians on the six-man junta and several of the eleven cabinet ministers, have moved quickly to consolidate their positions by appointing numerous pro-Communists and suspected Communists to second and third echelon posts.
 2. The junta's press office is being run by a pro-Communist who has ordered one radio station to carry a daily Communist-prepared broadcast that viciously attacks the US. He is moving in on other propaganda media.
 3. Communists and other extremists are demanding the removal of all Osorio supporters from the government.
 - B. Osorio, who expected to rule from behind the scenes until he is restored to the presidency in elections scheduled for 1962, told a US Embassy officer on 3 November that no Communists are in the government

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and that he cannot consider plans to restrict the extreme left because such measures would disrupt the unity the provisional government must have in order to implement urgently needed social and economic changes.

1. The leftist civilian appointees, however, do not now seem responsive to his directives.
- C. The army is becoming increasingly apprehensive over Osorio's failure to take preventive action against a Communist takeover.
 1. A group of officers claiming support of all army units except the national guard reportedly are working on a plan to save the military's predominant role in the government.
 2. They must act fast, however, before the Communists are able to organize a civil force strong enough to defy the army.
- D. A pro-Castro regime in El Salvador would be a very serious threat to neighboring countries in Central America, especially Guatemala.

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